

melbourne indy BULLETIN

The story continues...

Issue #07 : Mon, September 25th, 2000

Prague prepares for the arrival of the global movement

Septembr 25-28 the IMF and World Bank are holding their 55th annual summit in Prague. A Global Day of Action has been called for September 26. As part of the ongoing resistance to the world financial oligarchy, a global coalition of environmental, human rights campaigners, autonomous anarchist groups has started a mass mobilization to Prague. Decentralized actions in solidarity are being planned worldwide.

Up to 20,000 representatives of global economy (IMF, World Bank, G7, Trade Ministers etcetera) will be meeting in Prague to discuss global trade and economic development. It is expected that as many as 100,000 activists will converge in Prague to protest against these meetings. Prague authorities have revoked permits for all street demonstrations on September 26th. This attempt to prevent the protests is unlikely to stop

the thousands of activists gearing up to disrupt the IMF/World Bank meetings next week. Reports suggest the atmosphere in Prague is tense with an increased police presence and roads blockaded around the proposed IMF meeting headquarters.

Tension between 'anarchists' and right wing 'skin-heads' have flared on several occasions especially following an anti-racism rally through Prague and mobilisation against the G7 meeting.

Many activists are been refused entry to the Czech Republic. The Czech police and government authorities have contributed to an interna-

tional list of "persona non grata" which is being used to deny entry to certain activists to Prague. On September 24th seventeen people were detained at the Czech-Austrian border. They were travelling by train with another 1,000 activists from Ya Basta and other autonomous groups. As S26 approaches and more activists converge in Prague the scene is set for another showdown between the people and the ruling elite.

For more refer to www.prague.indymedia.org



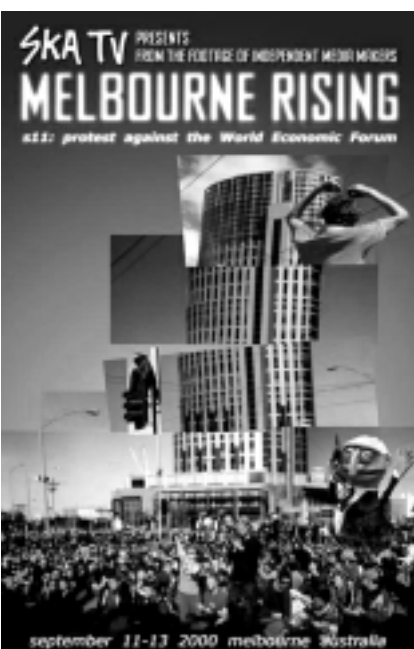
S11 VIDEO AVAILABLE NOW

Produced by SKA TV, using footage from many independent media makers, this video covers many of the actions and activities which was S11, the protests against the WEF.

\$25 individuals;

\$65 screenings/organisations

Available from New Internationalist Bookshop at Trades Hall, Carlton.



Special CAR FREE DAY for Adelaide folks

Knowing authorities in Adelaide would never put any official support behind 'car free day', Karen Eliot decided to initiate one herself.

She set about designing a leaflet announcing the cbd would be closed to cars on September 21, 2000 and put the appropriate authoritative logos on the bottom of the page (Adelaide City Council, Government of SA, Transport SA). One thousand A2 sized two colour posters were reproduced along with five thousand A5 sized two colour flyers. The contact phone number was that of Adelaide's only major newspaper the 'Advertiser' (full of the usual crap verging on redneck journalism). The posters were pasted on the streets while the flyers were placed under the windscreens of cars.

According to one eyewitness account, the head of Transport SA freaked out when given a copy of the leaflet. An enquiry to the Advertiser gave the impression that they had recieved numerous calls.

The prank made TV, radio and print media when the Adelaide City Council made a media release denying any association with the poster.

It was probably just my imagination but on car free day there seemed to be less traffic in the city. Feed back informed me that at least four people didn't drive into the city because of this poster. Who knows how many more? The day ended with a celebratory *critical mass* bike ride through the city. Hopefully this reignites *critical mass* in Adelaide after dying out in recent months.



Melbourne Critical Mass - 3rd Friday of each month, 5:30pm outside State Library

S12 - Baton Tuesday - the cops go awol

Report by A.C made S12, Tuesday.

If Monday was a carnival of the oppressed, Tuesday was the war zone. The streets were emptier, the presence of infiltrators and provocateurs was far more obvious, and police provoked stir after stir. This was the day police tactics changed to reverse the success of Monday's blockade.

On Tuesday evening the police used their own brand of psychological warfare to counter the effectiveness of mobile blockade units. This evening the focus was on the three road entrances - King's Way, Power street, and Whiteman street.

The police massed behind their barricade, and engaged in elaborate games in which formations would assemble, regroup, horses would be moved from one entrance to another, riot police would march from building to building, even the police dogs were brought out for intimidation value.

The immediate aim of this was to create confusion, to tire people out as they moved from entrance to entrance trying to second-guess the cops - the ultimate aim was the (now infamous) surprise riot police charge at Power street. This ultra-violent charge is currently the subject of legal investigations. Riot police charged the rear of the Power street blockade, without warning.



Within minutes they had control of the intersection.

This is what happens when the state's control over the public sphere is threatened. Dissent is demonised, and contrasted with its safe alternative (have a rally, listen to official speeches, then go home), a pretext is found (screws, bolts, water balloons with urine), and our political leaders and opinion-shapers fall into line in condemnation. For many seasoned activists the violence of

the state is no surprise - for others the media war in the lead-up, the univocal condemnation from political leaders, and the cynical justification of ultra-violence by the police chief must have been shocking.

Both the Labor party premiers of NSW and Victoria described us as

fascists - a shining example of Orwellian double-speak if we have ever heard one, given that at the same time as they were making these comments the unbadged police were using arbitrary violence to break the blockade.

Its amazing we didn't destroy the city the next day - only the culture of non-violence of a good portion of the activists, and the restraint of those who felt like going out for revenge stopped a full scale riot. The level of discipline in the face of police violence was remarkable.

Alt.Brit View of S11 - SchNEWS Report

Up The Doof

On the other side of the world...guess what happens when the demonstrations are anti-capitalist...

As Sydney prepares itself for protests around the Olympics, anti-corporate campaigners have been busy in Melbourne where the World Economic Forum (WEF) held its Asia Pacific Economic Summit earlier this week. The WEF is an annual corporate knees-up for political and business leaders, academics and media luvvies. (see SchNEWS 246). Their intentions are to strike up business deals, facilitate free trade and generally continue in the same vein as SchNEWS' other favourites the World Trade Organisation. In fact the idea of the WTO came out of a WEF get-together, so you get the idea of the kind of people they are.

Resistance to the conference was impressive, with umbrella group S11 organising early on and arranging counter-conferences and teach-ins. On Monday around 10,000 protestors successfully blockade all entrances to the summit. According to a conference official, an estimated 200 of the 800 delegates never made it to the summit, whilst some of them had to be flown in by helicopter and others ferried down the river Yarra in

small boats getting very wet in the process!

Police - inexperienced but supposedly wary of fanning the flames of Seattle-style unrest - attempted to force protestors apart with batons and brought in horses to storm the blockade lines. There were injuries on both sides - including two New Zealand Greens MPs - and some protestors were hospitalised. Despite all this the blockades were successfully maintained, mounting a serious obstacle to the conference. Everyone's favourite billionaire Bill Gates sadly had to cancel two of his speeches outside the conference including one to local schoolchildren. Later in the day bands and speakers took to the stage, and the day ended with a doof* when a sound system on the back of a truck rolled up.

For more reports of the WEF protests check out www.melbourne.indymedia.org
For info and coverage of the Olympic Games protests look at www.sydney.indymedia.org or www.realgames.org

*SchNEWS Vocab-watch: doof - Aussie word for rave. (doof doof doof doof getit?)

more:
<http://www.ainfos.ca/en/ainfos05007.html>

State and Capital

(IndyMedia 1:45pm Thu Sep 21 '00)

The Australian and all world governments (may-be with exception of Cuba) have proven their support of capital over everything else. (With the use of armed force against peaceful demonstrators as seen in Melbourne on S12&13 and with the military on stand by to shoot to kill) For whoever doesn't know what capital is doing please read this next article so you can join the action which is needed to save our planet and human race.

The World Economic Forum met (or at least tried to meet) at Crown Casino on September 11. It is part of big business-global, transnational, super-big business-which says it is tired of being told what to do by governments. Existing laws imposing checks on the activity of major companies have little effect- look at the level of fines for pollution compared with the profits made in operations involving pollution. But the corporations fear even this derisory form of "regulation". It limits their power, no matter how slightly. They prefer to locate in countries where wages are lowest, working conditions and environmental standards worst, which usually means where there is no pretence of democracy- and they go to these countries if their political and economic ultimatums are not met.

When a company is big enough to shift anywhere in the world it shows its political preferences. Governments must listen to capital not to voters.

A message to all S11 Protesters.

(IndyMedia 10:51pm Fri Sep 22 '00)

I do not want to start this article in an ego-like manner but first I would like to say a few things about myself. I am 25, work for the Federal Government as a policy analyst, live in conservative Canberra and wear a tie to work and shave everyday (well almost everyday). In fact I am pretty much opposite to what mainstream media has portrayed as your 'average' S11 supporter. With that in mind I have one thing to say to those who protested at Crown.

Thank you.

Recently I was beginning to think that 'the bad guys' had won. That the corporations, with the support of western Governments had successfully polluted the minds of enough people so that they could carry on with their morally bankrupt activities, free of questions, free of accountability.

Thank you for proving me wrong.

A special thank you to those like Maya (who has posted her experience on this website) who had the courage to stand up for what is right and just in the face of intimidation and ultimately violence. Your actions put people like me to shame who knowing about the protests thought "what is the point, the fight is lost." I hope your wounds heal quickly and please make sure that you get to a trauma debrief, it is an important step.

Thank you for showing me that the fight is far from lost, in fact it has only just started. Stay true, stay strong and most importantly stay safe.

PS - SEE YOU AT THE NEXT PROTEST :)

The Way you Fight is the Fight! Respect diversity don't quash it

(Posted to melbourne.indymedia.org 12:40pm Sun Sep 24 '00)

Seattle and s11 have been hailed as part of a 'global movement' creating new alliances between groups that have traditionally not worked together. This, I think, is a somewhat romantic reaction to s11 in light of some of the tensions that were apparent during the protests. A new movement should be about diversity not mono-culture.

It was extremely hard to work out what was happening down at the Casino from 11-13 September. A huge area with a large number of people gathered at various entrances with quite a difficulty sharing information between

them. (I)Xpress bike courier service was initially set up with a view to disseminating information between groups, but it seemed that the Marshalls had no idea that they existed or just chose to ignore them. The mainstream media were no help either.

Many groups were coming from completely different political persuasions with extremely different ideas about how to organise and blockade or if indeed a blockade were the right way to demonstrate. There were rumors about certain blocks letting people through and power struggles to claim responsibility for the success of s11. As AWOL never spoke to the mainstream media public perception of s11 is that there was one organising group with leaders and spokes people. This was quite amusing as I was keenly observing the amount of energy that AWOL were putting in to s11 and well aware that without the contribution of such a group there would not have been such a large contingent from interstate, as broad an awareness in Melbourne or as many trained activists at s11.

I also found it hard as someone not interested in blockading to feel that I was part of the action. I was frustrated at being singled out and encouraged to go in this or that direction to block entrances when I had made a decision not to be involved on that level. I think the panic mentality of marshalls contributed to injuries, especially those suffering from shock. I am disappointed with the lack of information shared with people on the ground. There were 3000 Convergence Booklets, why were they not passed around the blockades?

It appears to me that the diversity of different groups is a positive and strengthening thing and that instead of trying to win each other over to create one combined rhetoric groups should respect diversity and work with it

not against it. I am not trying to present an "either / or" argument when discussing my reaction to AWOL/S11 Alliance, I think that the two ways of organising need both to provide people with a space that suits their politics and ways of organising. The problem was a lack of respect and communication between the two groups. S11

Alliance appeared to have no interest in having a dialogue with AWOL at Information Exchange or Spokes Council meetings organised in the lead-up. This to me indicates that s11 Alliance were a little more interested in the glory side of things, the media and the paper selling than the practicalities of forging alliances and working together to ensure that people were



safe and educated and free to self organise at s11. We are living in a world that is being increasingly homogenised and I think that a movement needs to be reflective of a new way of relating, not emulate the flaws in the existing system. The culture being encouraged is a mass consumer culture. This is a mono-culture and as such I believe any response to this way of living being impressed upon us needs to be diverse and complex. I found it extremely difficult to be offered membership of the DSP after returning from the baton charge on Tuesday night. I found it offensive and rude. My impression is that certain groups like to capitalise on events like s11 to bolster their membership. This is because they see a mono-cultural left, everyone towing one party line, as the way to effect change.

Behind the scenes however where a number of groups getting on with it. These groups are devoid of membership, don't talk to the mainstream media, don't seek recognition and as such did not receive any credit for the amount of work they put in to s11. Groups like (I)Xpress, the healing space, Food not Bombs, IndyMedia, the legal and first aid crews were busy organising and creating in a way that symbolises what I see the new movement as being about. These groups are non sectarian and are about getting things done.

If we are genuinely going to effect change we do have to be organised. We are up against people that are not about to relinquish their power, that employ PR companies to spin the truth and convince people that things are fine. We are being sold a mono-culture. We need to respond with diversity and creativity, united but not necessarily having a unity of political persuasions. We need to create our own culture outside the construction of the mainstream celebrating diversity not trying to convince each other one line is better than another.

S11 Webmakers the real heroes!

The autonomous affinity group behind the s11.org website should be commended for their fantastic efforts. s11.org was the 400th most popular site in the world in early September. Now the original s11.org site has been archived and a spunky new look post s11 version has been created providing legal, medical and debriefing information. The parade of heroes is one of the features of the new site, Black Block are one of the many groups recognised as heroes of s11... you too can become part of the hero march at www.s11.org.



hey groovers here's some stuff to keep you busy....

Tuesday 26th Sept 5.30pm Nike, Bourke St City. Rally in solidarity with Prague IMF/WB protests

11am, Sunday at uranium canister/sound system All welcome, bring a baton.

Tuesday 26th. Future Rescue Central Highlands. Skillsharing forest action training. Contact Meels 0428 882 802 From 26th September-2 October www.green.net.au/futurerescue

Access News every Monday 8pm Ch 31 and Trades Hall, cnrs Lygon and Victoria Streets, Carlton. SKA TV 9663 6976..

Friday 29th 1pm Parliament Steps In solidarity with St Josephs students who were expelled for attending s11 protests. Rally will present open letter to Mary Delahunty.

Sunday 1st Oct, Fringe Festival Opening Parade, Brunswick St, Fitzroy Puppet parade, monsanta clauses, rvgs etc,. Meet

Don't forget to check out Melbourne's independent media website.

www.melbourne.indymedia.org

Next IndyBulletin should coincide with the Fringe Parade...

The party is over - Mr. Bracks

The special BBQ for the thousands of police involved in the WEF / S11 operations was cancelled by Premier Steve Bracks last week due to "logistical problems". The opposition leader, Denis Naphthine called Bracks "spineless" and accused him of backing down to pressure from S-11 protesters who called on the government to cancel the BBQ. Naphthine also demanded that the Premier personally write a "thank you" card to each and every officer involved in the operations.

Bracks' response to protesters deeming them "un-Australian" and "fascist" and commending police for "restraint" has ignited outrage among some of his strongest supporters. The backlash against Bracks formalised when his own electorate branch, Williamstown, passed a motion condemning his comments towards protesters and calling for a cancellation of the bbq. Interestingly there has been no comments from Federal Labor Politicians about the issue.

Tuesday S12 baton charge by police on a small

group of blockaders was not preceded by any warning or direction to leave. The police may have chosen to clear a path for delegates' buses by arresting protesters, but instead they chose to employ violence. That Steve Bracks has chosen to support the police action in light of over two hundred complaints to the ombudsperson will



certainly reflect negatively on both his credibility and that of the ALP.

Whilst debate ensues many involved in S-11 are keeping pressure on the government to hold an independent inquiry in to the incidents which occurred during the protests.

There is a sense of shock that such violence could be sanctioned by the state when

Australians are encouraged to think of themselves as living in an independent and free country. This shock has provoked a re-evaluation of the role of government and the meaning of democracy itself.

USEFUL CONTACTS

IF YOU are a witness of mistreatment or victim of police violence, or have any video/photo evidence of police violence - please contact S11 Legal Team.

Their email is s11legal@yahoo.com, or phone Damien on 03 9391 2244 or 0418 140 387

WANT TO make an official complaint?

Victoria Ombudsman,
Level 22, 459 Collins Street,
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 03 9613 6222 / 1800 9614 0246
<http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/>

CONTACT the S11 Medical Team
s11medical@hotmail.com

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By the way.. to continue we need \$\$
indybulletin@antimedia.net
Mobile - 0419 809 742

No gold medals at Melbourne's "Business Olympics"

The anti-WEF protests saw 10,000 people succeed in partially blockading Melbourne's exclusive Crown Casino - stopping up to a third of the delegates from entering the Summit venue. There followed claims of police brutality - especially after police baton charged peaceful protestors and a woman was run over by an unmarked police vehicle. The so-called 'S-11' protests, held between September 11th and 13th, had the straightforward aim of shutting down the WEF's Asia Pacific Economic Summit 2000 - a meeting of powerful corporate leaders and top politicians interested in promoting business interests in the Asian region.

Predictably, mainstream Australian politicians opposed the demonstrations. The WEF summit organisers did seek to encourage some 'civil society' involvement in the discussions. One of the invitees was Dr Vandana Shiva, Founder Director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology based in New Delhi. Shiva used her speaker platform to urge WEF delegates to take notice of the demonstrations outside, saying that the protesters were "sending a signal back to a system which has forgotten about people". She had a simple message: "Growth of capitalism doesn't lead to a growth in democracy". Her words seemed to fall on deaf ears, however, as delegates spent much of the summit expressing excitement at the huge potential market represented by Asia. "China has 350 million TV sets and Indonesia has 25 million satellite television viewers" said Ziggy Switkowski, CEO of Australia's telecommunica-

tions carrier Telstra. Another speaker reminded delegates that China also has 300 million single child families "who want to do the best for their kids".

On the second and third days of the Summit, the protesters' blockade was less successful. Police used force to clear a path for the delegates entering and leaving the Casino complex by baton-charging protesters.

According to witnesses, over 50 protesters were taken to hospital, some suffering broken bones and heavy bruising. Police made 19 arrests during the whole confrontation. In fact the issue of violence dominated reports about the WEF and the S-11 protests. "When people look back, S-11 will be remembered because of the violence", said demonstrator Kate Fenderson. "The serious issues of corporate globalisation were never in the media."

According to participants, new partnerships between non-governmental organisations and other less formal groups have formed as a result of the S-11 protests. There is a sense amongst many protesters that S-11 has helped mature an "organic activism" in Australia.

The S-11 protests have also split the state's traditional allies - the Victorian Trade Union leadership and the State Labor Government - over the way the protest blockade was broken up by police. Leigh Hubbard, secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall, called for a "full investigation" in to the police action. "We as Victorians ought to be ashamed of what happened", he said.

Despite the violence and the failure to completely "shutdown" the summit, the S-11 protesters are claiming victory. "We showed them that thousands of people are opposed to corporate power through celebration and peaceful protest", said Fenderson. This emphasis was lost on one delegate: "From my viewpoint, those outside are opposing globalisation and those of us inside are promoting it", he said.

As Melbourne returns to 'business as usual', some protesters have packed their bags and headed to the Czech Republic for the next big 'action' against global capitalism. Known as S-26, the protest promises to be a huge rally against the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank - scheduled for September 26th in Prague.

But Dr Vandana Shiva warns that large scale protests take up a lot of energy. "The real work happens between Seattles", she emphasises. Back in Australia, the WEF summit has certainly succeeded in stirring up new debate about globalisation and the role of the corporations and government in the country. The unprecedented force used by police and the support for their actions from the Premier Steve Bracks has outraged traditional ALP supporters who are slowly realising that Labor may no longer be an alternative to the Liberal Party.